

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 6-7, 14-15, 19-21 and 23 are pending in the present application. Claims 19, 20 and 23 are amended; and Claims 8, 16 and 22 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. Claims 19, 20 and 23 are amended to be in independent form by incorporating the features of Claims 8, 16 and 22, respectively. Thus, no new matter is presented.

In the Office Action, Claims 8, 16 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Takahashi (U.S. Pat. 6,044,341) in view of Imamura (U.S. 2003/0012297); Claims 6, 7, 14, 15 and 21 are allowed; and Claims 19, 20 and 23 are objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

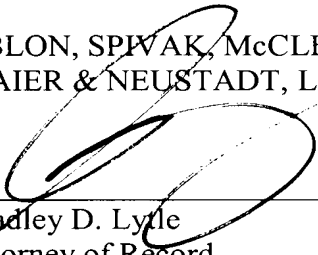
Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, Claims 19, 20 and 23 are amended to be in independent form by incorporating the features of now-canceled Claims 8, 16 and 22, respectively.

Consequently, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application including Claims 6-7, 14-15, 19-21 and 23 is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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